Portuguese Republic

World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth

Lisbon, Portugal
8-12 August 1998

United Nations

WCMRY/1998/14
21 July 1998

Original: English

COUNCIL OF THE ARAB MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS, TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

Note by the Conference secretariat

The Conference secretariat has the honour to make available to Conference participants, in the language of submission only, the attached resolution of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Youth Affairs and Sports.

98-21405

RE: World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth Affairs

The Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Youth Affairs and Sports,

Taking note of the recommendation made by its executive office,

Having held extensive discussions,

Decided :

1. to urge Arab ministers responsible of youth affairs and sports to attend the First World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth Affairs to be held in Lisbon, Portugal, from 8 to 12 August 1998;

2. that H.E. the president of the executive office should represent the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Youth Affairs and Sports in this conference to examine means of cooperation between the Council and other regional councils;

3. to urge Arab Ministers Responsible for Youth Affairs and Sports to encourage the participation of Arab youth delegations in the Third World Youth Forum to be held in Braga, Portugal from 2 to 7 August 1998. These delegations should actively participate in discussions and in the preparation of the final recommendations of the Conference;

4. to authorize Dr. Abdel Monem Amara, president of the executive office, to contact the Minister responsible for Youth Affairs in Portugal in order to examine the issue of introducing Arabic as a main and official language of the conference, on the understanding that expenses will be funded from the Arab Fund for Youth and Sports Activities;

5. that Arab ministers responsible for youth affairs and sports attending the conference hold a meeting in order to coordinate Arab positions during the conference.

(Resolution No. 9, 21st session, 18 February 1998)

Portuguese Republic

World Conference of Ministers
Responsible for Youth

Lisbon, Portugal
8-12 August 1998

United Nations

WCMRY/1998/15
21 July 1998

Original: English

SECOND ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING ON YOUTH, HELD AT KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, 17-18 NOVEMBER 1997

Note by the Conference secretariat

The Conference secretariat has the honour to make available to Conference participants, as received and in the language of submission only, the attached report of the Second ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth, which was held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 17 and 18 November 1997.

98-21406

REPORT
OF THE SECOND ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING ON YOUTH
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA
17 - 18 November 1997.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Second ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 17 - 18 November 1997, preceded by a Senior Officials Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 14 to 15 November 1997.

2. The Meeting was attended by H.E. the Honorable Pehin Orang Kaya Digadong Seri Lela Dato Seri Paduka Haji Awang Hussain, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports of Brunei Darussalam; H.E. Mr. Hayono Isman, State Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports of the Republic of Indonesia; H.E. Mr. Phongsanee Gnouttitham, Deputy Secretary-General of the Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union; H.E. Tan Sri Dato' Hj. Muhyiddin b. Hj. Mohd. Yassin, Minister of Youth and Sports of Malaysia and H.E. Dato' Loke Yuen Yow, Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports of Malaysia; H.E. U Than Shwe, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office of the Union of Myanmar; H.E. Mrs. Amina Rasul Bernardo, Presidential Advisor for Youth Affairs of the Philippines; H.E. Mr. Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for National Development, Second Minister for Foreign Affairs and Chairman of National Youth Council of the Republic of Singapore; H.E. Mr Prasit Damrongchai, Permanent Secretary to Prime Minister, Thailand; H.E. Mr. Vu Trong Kim, Chairman of the Vietnam National Youth Committee, Vietnam and their respective delegations. H.E. Dato' Ajit Singh, Secretary-General of ASEAN, and members of his staff were also in attendance. The full list of Delegates and Observer appears as **ANNEX 1**.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

H.E. Tan Sri Dato' Hj. Muhyiddin Hj. Mohd. Yassin, Minister of Youth and Sports of Malaysia, and H.E. U Than Shwe, Minister in the Prime

Minister's Office of the Union of Myanmar were elected as Chairman and Vice Chairman, respectively.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE CHAIRMAN

4. The Chairman, H.E. Tan Sri Dato' Hj. Muhyiddin Hj. Mohd. Yassin, Minister of Youth and Sports of Malaysia, in his welcome address, noted that the First ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth in Jakarta had made a significant decision to enhance the role of youth in this region. He further noted with appreciation that the recommendations of the First Ministerial Meeting had been successfully implemented. Having achieved considerable progress in this area, he called for the process to move on to a higher plane to consolidate greater cooperation in the ASEAN framework. He observed that the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth has promoted the development of a network of relationships among ASEAN countries. The Chairman extended a warm welcome to Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar which were attending the Meeting for the first time and expressed his hope that the Meeting will further strengthen ASEAN solidarity.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF AGENDA

5. The Meeting adopted the Agenda which appears **ANNEX 2**.

AGENDA ITEM 4: BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS

6. The Meeting was held in plenary.

GENDA ITEM 5: STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTERS AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF ASEAN

nei Darussalam

H.E. Pehin Orang Kaya Digadong Seri Lela Dato Seri Paduka Haji ng Hussain, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Brunei Darussalam, ered his statement which appears as **ANNEX 3**.

Indonesia

8. H.E. Mr. Hayono Isman, State Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports of the Republic of Indonesia, delivered his statement which appears as **ANNEX 4**.

Laos

9. H.E. Mr. Phongsanee Gnouttitham, Deputy Secretary-General of the Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union, delivered his statement which appears as **ANNEX 5**.

Myanmar

10. H.E. U Than Shwe, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office of Myanmar, delivered his statement which appears as **ANNEX 6**.

Philippines

11. H.E. Mrs. Amina Rasul Bernardo, Presidential Advisor for Youth Affairs of the Philippines, delivered her statement which appears as **ANNEX 7**.

Singapore

12. H.E. Mr. Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for National Development, Second Minister for Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the National Youth Council of Singapore, delivered his statement which appears as **ANNEX 8**.

Thailand

13. H.E. Mr. Prasit Damrongchai, Permanent Secretary to the Prime Minister of Thailand, delivered his statement which appears as **ANNEX 9**.

Vietnam

14. H.E. Mr. Vu Trong Kim, Chairman of the Vietnam National Youth Committee, delivered his statement which appears as **ANNEX 10**.

Secretary-General of ASEAN

15. H. E. Dato' Ajit Singh, Secretary-General of ASEAN, delivered his statement which appears as **ANNEX 11**.

Malaysia

16. H.E. Dato' Loke Yuen Yow, Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports of Malaysia, delivered his statement which appears as **ANNEX 12**.

AGENDA ITEM 6: OVERVIEW OF ASY ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE THE FIRST ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING ON YOUTH

17. The Meeting noted with appreciation the ASY Chairman's Report on the Overview of ASY Accomplishments Since the First ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth, which appears as **ANNEX 13** and expressed satisfaction at the progress made by the ASY since 1992.

18. The Meeting requested the ASY to consider the following measures to ensure the successful implementation of ASEAN youth policy:

a. adopt a programme approach in developing regional projects in order to ensure that the impact of ASY projects will be maximised and sustained through the following strategies:

- avoid fragmentation in the formulation of projects and activities by developing coherent, mutually reinforcing programmes in line with AMMY priorities;
- enhance co-ordination with relevant ASEAN bodies to ensure synergy and to avoid duplication;
- to identify and formulate projects based on comprehensive and objective assessments of the needs and problems to be addressed at the regional level;

b. further strengthen existing networks to promote the exchange of information on youth activities, training opportunities and experiences; and

c. enhance NGO participation in the activities of the ASY, particularly to further promote the involvement of the Committee on ASEAN Youth Cooperation (CAYC) in ASY activities.

AGENDA ITEM 7: CONSIDERATION OF THE SOM REPORT

19. The Meeting noted the Report of the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting for the Second ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 14 to 15 November 1997, which appears as **ANNEX 14.**

AGENDA ITEM 8: ASEAN YOUTH HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

20. The Meeting noted the revised proposal, ASEAN Youth Human Resource Development Programme, prepared by Malaysia which appears as **ANNEX 15** and agreed that a human resources development programme should be developed in view of the importance of education and training for youth development.

21. The Meeting welcomed with appreciation the offer of Malaysia to make available its training facilities to ASEAN Member Countries.

22. The Meeting agreed to request the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Youth to undertake a feasibility study in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat, based on Malaysia's proposal, to look into, inter alia, the following:

a. review and assess the existing education and training programmes under SEAMEO, the ASEAN University Network, and relevant activities under the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Labour Affairs;

b. identify co-operative activities in training which are consistent with the mandate and resources of the ministries responsible for youth matters in the ASEAN Member Countries;

c. identify priority programme areas; and

d. identify national training institutions which could be elevated to regional centres of excellence to promote the sharing of training resources and expertise.

AGENDA ITEM 9: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE KUALA LUMPUR AGENDA ON ASEAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

23. The Meeting considered and adopted the revised Kuala Lumpur Agenda on ASEAN Youth Development which appears as **ANNEX 16.** The Meeting requested the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Youth to initiate measures to implement the Kuala Lumpur Agenda.

AGENDA ITEM 10: FREQUENCY OF AMMY MEETING AND DATE AND VENUE OF AMMY III

24. The Meeting agreed that the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth should meet once every two to three years, and informally in between, as and when necessary.

25. The Meeting agreed that the Third ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth will be held in Myanmar in the year 2000.

AGENDA ITEM 11: OTHER MATTERS

26. The Meeting noted the Philippines' Discussion Paper on "The Need for an ASEAN Agenda for the World Conference of World Ministers Responsible for Youth", and agreed that the discussion paper, which appears as **ANNEX 17**, be submitted to the 15th ASY Meeting for consideration.

27. The Meeting also noted Indonesia's Paper, "Youth Industrial Park", which appears as **ANNEX 18.**

28. To further promote networking among ASEAN youth organisations and youth travel in the region, the Ministers agreed to request the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Youth to explore the possibility of :

a. enabling youth organisations to exchange information with the use of computers, and linking the various youth organisations on the Internet through the ASEANWEB; and

b. introducing special fares and tour packages for ASEAN youth to foster greater ASEAN awareness.

AGENDA ITEM 12: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

29. The Meeting considered and adopted the Joint Press Statement which appears as **ANNEX 19.**

AGENDA ITEM 13: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

30. The Meeting considered and adopted the Report of the Second ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 17 to 18 November 1997.

AGENDA ITEM 14: CLOSING REMARKS

31. H.E. Tan Sri Dato' Hj. Muhyiddin Hj. Mohd. Yassin, Minister of Youth and Sports of Malaysia, stated in his closing remarks that the Meeting proceeded smoothly and successfully with the excellent cooperation and commitment of the Ministers. He took the opportunity to thank the Ministers for attending the Meeting despite their busy schedules, and wished them a pleasant stay in Malaysia and a safe journey home.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

32. The Meeting expressed its sincere appreciation to the people and Government of Malaysia for the generous hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting.

33. The Meeting expressed its sincere appreciation to the ASEAN Secretariat for its invaluable contributions to the Meeting.

34. The Meeting was held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN cordiality and solidarity.

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AMMY-II
1997

KUALA LUMPUR AGENDA

ON ASEAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

WE, THE ASEAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUTH MATTERS;

Aware that ASEAN was established to accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations;

Realising that ASEAN has an important role in promoting regional peace and stability, human development as well as rapid economic growth and industrialisation;

Mindful that the youth of ASEAN represent a large proportion of the ASEAN population and are a vast and dynamic resource for national and regional development;

Recognising the importance of youth participation in the formulation and implementation of national development policies;

Considering the opportunities and facilities available for comprehensive youth development in the region;

Reaffirming the Bangkok Declaration of Principles to Strengthening ASEAN Collaboration on Youth of 1983, the Jakarta Declaration of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on

Youth in 1992, Singapore Declaration of 1992, and the Bangkok Summit Declaration of 1995; and

Anticipating the challenges and opportunities of globalisation and its impact on the region's youth.

DO HEREBY DECLARE:

First, that the aims of the ASEAN Youth Policy are:

1. To pursue continuous peace and solidarity, progress and prosperity in the ASEAN region through the positive, active and proactive participation of ASEAN youth, in the spirit of ASEAN fraternity;

2. To prepare and empower ASEAN youth to meet the challenges of globalisation in the 21st century: and

3. To actively promote the understanding of sustainable and balanced development among the younger generation.

Second, that to carry out these aims, Member Countries shall be guided by the following strategies:

1. To formulate programmes and activities to strengthen regional solidarity, stability, prosperity and identity;

2. To inculcate the sharing of values, responsibilities and a common vision, and ASEAN fraternity among the young generation;

3. To enhance the spiritual, moral and cultural values of the youth in order for them to cope with the future challenges of rapid development and globalisation;

4. To equip the youth with appropriate skills and competencies in order to ensure the region's competitiveness; and

5. To foster the development of leadership, human values, entrepreneurship and communication skills and the spirit of voluntarism.

Third, that the priority areas of concern are:

1. The strengthening of ASEAN awareness;

2. The promotion of human resource development in line with the rapid economic growth of the region;

3. The attainment of equitable and sustainable development;

4. The enhancement of youth-related research and development (R&D) and the sharing of science, technology and information through effective networking;

5. The preservation and promotion of ASEAN cultural forms and values;

6. The promotion of youth development as an integral part of national development; and

7. The promotion of the participation of the NGOs in youth activities.

Fourth, that in implementing the Kuala Lumpur Agenda, there is a need to strengthen national and regional coordination and networking system of the various government, non-government, and other youth organisations.

DONE in Kuala Lumpur on the Seventeenth Day of November in the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety Seven.

FOR BRUNEI DARUSSALAM:

Pehin Orang Kaya DiGadong Seri Lela Dato Seri Paduka Haji Awang Hussain bin Pehin Orang Kaya DiGadong Seri DiRaja Dato Laila Utama Hj Awang Mohd Yusof
Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA:

Hayono Isman
State Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports

FOR THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC:

Phongsanee Gnouttitham
Deputy Secretary General of the Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union

FOR MALAYSIA:

Tan Sri Dato' Haji Muhyiddin b. Hj. Mohd. Yassin
Minister of Youth and Sports

FOR THE UNION OF MYANMAR:

U Than Shwe
Minister for Prime Minister's Office
and Central Executive Commitee Member of Union
Solidarity and Development Association

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES:

Amina Rasul Bernardo
Presidential Advisor for Youth Affairs
and Chairperson of National Youth Commission

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE:

Koo Tsai Kee
Parliamentary Secretary for National Development

FOR THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND:

Prasit Damrongchai
Permanent Secretary to Prime Minister

FOR THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM:

Vu Trong Kim
Chairman of the Vietnam National Youth Commitee

Portuguese Republic

World Conference of Ministers
Responsible for Youth

Lisbon, Portugal
8-12 August 1998

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FIRST BALTIC SEA YOUTH MINISTERS CONFERENCE, HELD AT VISBY, SWEDEN, ON 5 AND 6 JUNE 1998

Note by the Conference secretariat

The Conference secretariat has the honour to make available to Conference participants, as received and in the language of submission only, the attached documents of the first Baltic Sea Youth Ministers Conference, which was held at Visby, Sweden, on 5 and 56 June 1998.

REGERINGSKANSLIET

1998-06-06

Ministry of the Interior

Conclusions of the chairing country on implementation of a plan of action for Baltic Sea Co-operation in the youth field - draft version

5-6th of June 1998 a first Baltic Sea Youth Minister Conference was held in Visby, Sweden. During the first day of the Conference a plan of action for Baltic Sea Co-operation in the youth field was adopted. In relation to the discussions held on the implementation of that plan of action, the chair concludes the following:

The Chairing country welcomes

- the proposal by Finland to assume responsibility for the development of youth research, notably by arranging a first Baltic Sea Youth Research Symposium in year 2000.

- the proposal by Finland to assume responsibility for looking into how a joint internet-server could be developed as a forum for information and communication on Baltic Sea youth Co-operation.

- the proposal by Germany to arrange a broad-based Baltic Sea Youth Conference in the year 2000 to evaluate the progress made and to outline the future co-operation.

- the proposal by Poland to arrange a follow-up Baltic Sea Youth Seminar in Poland in 1999,

- the proposal by Latvia to arrange in year 2000 a Baltic Sea Song and Dance festival for young people, as a concrete contribution from the Youth Field to the Cultural Co-operation between the Baltic Sea States.

- the proposal by Lithuania to establish a Baltic Sea Youth Centre in Lithuania and to arrange a meeting with the purpose to set up a network of Youth Centres in the Baltic Sea Region.

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- the proposal by Finland to arrange a Baltic Sea Youth project competition, where the most interesting and innovative Baltic Sea Youth Project plan will be rewarded, and to welcome the other Baltic Sea States to contribute to the competition.

- the proposal by the Baltic Sea States Co-operation (BSSSC), the Swedish government and the Baltic Youth Forum to assume responsibility for conducting a study on how to focus and make common use of national resources for Baltic Sea Co-operation in the youth field, and to make a report on this subject well before the Baltic Sea Youth Conference in Germany in year 2000.

- the proposals by the National Agencies in the Region for the Youth for Europe programme to develop common activities within the programmes and to initiate common co-operation activities with other Regions in Europe in general, and in particular

*the proposal by the Polish National Agency to arrange a partner finding activity in relation to the Youth Expo in Gdansk, Poland in oktober/november 1998,

* the proposal by the Swedish Agency to arrange a training seminar for youth trainers in the Baltic Sea States in 1998,

* the proposal by the Danish Agency to arrange a large partner-finding Fair for the Baltic Sea States concerned in Denmark in April 1999, where a number of youth projects from each country will be invited,

* the opportunities presented for youth workers to take part in short study visits already planned in Warsaw, Poland and to Estonia in the autumn of 1998,

- the proposal by the Polish National Youth Council to invite all National Youth Councils within the Region to a contact seminar in the near future.

The chairing country further welcomes

- the first Conference on Barents Region Co-operation in the Youth Field, organized by the Finnish Ministry of Education and the European Commission, and to be held jointly in Finland and Murmansk, Russia in Oktober 1998,

- the initiative by the Regional Council in Kalmar County in Sweden to arrange a Baltic Sea Youth Parliament/Assembly for secondary school pupils, to be held in 1999.

- the initiative by the Council of the Stockholm-Mälar Region to arrange a "Baltic Sea Youth Forum" in September 1999 for secondary school pupils and teachers from all the Baltic Sea States,

- the initiative by the the regional Youth Council of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany, to arrange a Baltic Sea Youth Conference with the theme "A social Society - we'll build it", to be held 12-19 September 1998, to which 18 youth representatives from each country will be invited,

- the Baltic-German Youth Summer Academy for youth leaders and youth workers to be held in Latvia in 21-28 June 1998,

- the existing possibilities for trainee placements for young people within the Region, which are offered by the Nordic Council through the programmes "Nordpraktik" and "Östjobb", and which are administered by the Nordic Association,

- the number of various Baltic Sea youth activities taking place within the Platform Network for Interregional Youth Exchanges,

- the development of the Baltic Sea Trade Union's youth Co-operation, where a number of smaller projects are in the process of being developed with the aim to establish a network of young people within trade unions,

- the development of the Baltic Sea Co-operation among neurological disabled people´s organisations, as being presented at the Conference

- the development of the Youth Co-operation evolving between young people living on the seven major islands of the Baltic Sea through the project Wave Breakers,

- the development of Baltic Sea Youth Seminars particularly focusing on democracy issues, arranged by the organisation Young European Federalists (JEF),

- the development of a number of youth seminars centred around various political issues of common interest for the Baltic Sea Region, being organized by the Young Christian Democrats in a number of Baltic Sea States,

- the development of training activities taking place within the Nordic-Baltic Minority Youth Network, in particular the international seminar on European Integration and the role of minorities youth,

- the development of environmental youth activities taking place with the project Hydron men Ariston,

Regarding dissemination of the plan of action adopted and the results achieved during the Conference, the Chairing country concludes;

- to formally send the plan of action to the Council of Baltic Sea States asking them to draw attention to youth policy co-operation on their agenda.

- to send the Final report of the Conference as a contribution from the Baltic Sea Region to the World Youth Ministers Conference, which will take place in Lisbon, Portugal, in August 1998

- to ask all the Baltic Sea States to distribute the plan of action and the Conclusions on implementation to the relevant regional and local institutions who are involved in Baltic Sea Youth Co-operation,

The chairing country also

- acknowledges the central role in the development of Baltic Sea Youth Co-operation played by the Baltic Youth Office of the Regional Youth Council of Schleswig-Holstein, Germany,

- acknowledges the important work done within the Baltic Youth Forum, as a platform for the National Youth Councils in the Region, in developing Baltic Sea Youth Co-operation,

- takes note of the will expressed by several youth representatives to increase the flexibility and the user-friendliness of the various youth programmes and funding possibilities existing and to make room also for innovative initiatives which does not fit in to the ordinary funding criteria.

- takes note of the possibilities for funding mobility projects for groups of disadvantaged youth through the Interrail Mobility Fund administered by the Council of Europe.

- takes note of the opinion expressed by several participants to develop other forms of information and guidance services for the Baltic Sea Co-operation in addition to the proposed joint internet web-site.

- takes note of the views expressed by the Baltic Sea States participating in the European Union youth programmes and not being members of the Union, on the formal obstacles existing for common projects between these States within the programmes,

- takes note of the need to remember and emphasise that the basis for increased co-operation in the youth field is people-to-people co-operation

on a grassroots level, particularly activities initiated by young people themselves,

6 June 1998

Ministry of the Interior

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A plan of action for the future Baltic Sea Co-operation in the youth field -final version

Preamble

With regard to

- The Presidency Declaration of the Baltic Sea States Summit in Visby, Sweden, in May 1996, in which the "promotion of contacts between young people in the Baltic Sea Region" was underlined,

- the Baltic Sea Region initiative by the European Commission, acknowledging the European dimension of this co-operation,

- The Conference on the Baltic Sea Co-operation in the Youth Field in Helsinki, Finland, 30 May - 2 June 1997, and it's final declaration, in which the conference invites the ministers responsible for youth affairs in the Baltic Sea region to organise a meeting and to prepare a proposal for a plan for co-ordination of Youth Actions in the Baltic Sea region to be discussed in the meeting of ministers,

- The European Commission's Agenda 2000 proposing a coherent programme to prepare the Central and Eastern European applicant countries for accession to the European Union,

- The conclusions of the fifth Conference on Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Co-operation, 27-28th October 1997 in Gdansk, Poland, in which the Conference called for the setting up of a Baltic Sea Youth Foundation,

- The European Council meeting in Luxembourg 12-13 December 1997, where the Council noted that Finland has submitted a proposal on a

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Northern Dimension for the policies of the Union and requested the Commission to present an interim report on this subject at the European Council meeting in 1998,

- The Presidency Declaration of the Baltic Sea States Summit in Riga, Latvia, in January 1998, in which it was stated "that people to people contacts, in particular youth exchanges, were the basis for better understanding and respect of the cultural diversity in the region",

- The final declaration of the Council of Europe Youth Minister conference in Bucharest 27-29 April 1998, in which it was declared as an objective of the Council of Europe's youth policy to strengthen regional co-operation in the youth field and in which the governments were recommended to encourage regional co-operation in the youth field,

- The conclusions of the seminar "Co-operation among youth organisations in the Baltic Sea", organised by the Norwegian Youth Council and Baltic Youth Forum in Oslo, Norway, 30 April- 4 May.1998, in which Baltic Sea Co-operation in the Youth Field in general and the role of youth organisations in particular was discussed.

The Ministers responsible for Youth Affairs in the Baltic Sea region have met in Visby 5-6 June together with representatives of national youth councils and representatives from the European Commission, the Youth Directorate of the Council of Europe, the Youth for Europe national agencies and different regional bodies, in order to discuss Baltic Sea Co-operation in the Youth Field. The participants in the conference committed themselves to further develop co-operation, based on equal partnership among all actors, and have concluded the following:

Objectives

1. The aim is to develop among young people a common regional identity and understanding of our common cultural heritage, while respecting the cultural diversity of the region, for improvement of young people's living conditions and development of their potential. The aim is also to promote an active participation of young people in the development of democratic and pluralistic civic societies in the States of the Baltic Sea Region. These aims will be reached by strengthening Baltic Sea co-operation in the youth field, both in terms of increased youth mobility and youth participation within the region and in terms of increased contacts between youth policy structures in the Baltic Sea region.

Priorities

2. Without excluding co-operation in other areas, the priority areas for youth co-operation in the Baltic Sea region are;

- Baltic Sea Co-operation in the Youth Field in a European context, encouraging co-operation with other sub-regional areas of Europe and the expansion of the youth co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region to cover the Northern Europe as a whole,

- The role of youth participation and non-governmental youth organisations in the development of a democratic and tolerant society in general and the civil society in particular, including minority groups and give special attention to co-operation with disadvantaged and marginalized young people.

- Enhancement of young people's employability through non-formal education, the promotion of life long learning and the improvement of young people's international competence,

- Youth policy contribution to sectoral policies where Baltic Sea co-operation exists, particularly in the environmental field.

Actions

3. To agree on the following actions:

- to create favourable framework conditions for co-operation between young people in the region, through non-governmental youth organisations as well as other initiatives by young people themselves, and to provide reliable sources of financing for such co-operation,

- to initiate a study on how to focus and make common use of national resources for Baltic Sea co-operation in the youth field in order to increase multilateral youth projects,

- to improve the possibilities for support to Baltic Sea youth co-operation projects within the European Commission's Baltic Sea Region initiative,

- to develop common youth activities in the region within the European Union programmes, in particular the Youth for Europe-programme and the anticipated European voluntary service programme, striving for equal participation for all Baltic Sea States concerned,

- to initiate common training activities within the European Youth Fund and the European Youth Centres of the Council of Europe, or within joint training activities of Council of Europe and the European Union,

- to step up the exchange of experiences and information on a civil servant level, including study visits and short term exchange projects,

- to reduce barriers to youth mobility in the region in accordance with the recommendation on youth mobility of the Council of Europe (95)18, and to facilitate access to mobility programmes for all young people, including also disabled young people,

- to support the development of youth research networks within the Baltic Sea region and to encourage regular publications of data and conclusions of the youth research,

- to encourage politicians on all levels to participate in development of the youth policy and in Baltic Sea youth co-operation projects in particular,

- to promote regular mutual consultations among all actors involved in the Baltic Sea co-operation in the youth field.

Follow up

4. to follow up the conference by

- requesting the Council of Baltic Sea States to draw the attention to youth policy co-operation on their agenda, in particular as an element within the promotion of a people-to people partnership,

- giving the general responsibility of following up the development of Baltic Sea youth co-operation in relation to this plan of action to the chairing country of the Council of Baltic Sea States, calling upon the chairing State to co-operate with the predecessor and successor and to report annually on the development of youth co-operation to the European Community, the Council of Europe and the European Youth Forum,

- arranging a broad-based conference in the year 2000 to evaluate the progress made in co-operation and to outline the future,

- influencing all the relevant co-operation structures in the region to deal with youth policy questions and to take this plan of action into account wherever appropriate,

- developing and maintaining a common internet web-site, as a forum for information and communication on Baltic Sea youth co-operation.